

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION “HOT ISSUES” INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: *Integrated Award Environment (IAE)*

1. BACKGROUND:

IAE was one of the original 24 initiatives under President Bush’s Management Agenda enacted by the E-Government Act of 2002, and assigned to GSA as the Managing Partner. Originally, to establish the environment, IAE adopted, adapted, or acquired systems that met all agencies needs and replaced paper-based systems that existed. The IAE vision is to continue to evolve and integrate the existing portfolio of electronic systems used for awarding and administering Federal financial assistance and contracts.

IAE began an aggregation strategy to migrate portfolio of stovepiped systems in one environment to eliminate supporting efforts, standardizing and enhance data quality, and reduce operational cost. An analysis of technical alternatives was conducted in 2013 resulting a decision document signed by the Federal CIO and the GSA Administrator approving the path forward for the aggregation strategy. In November 2013, the IAE was officially moved to the GSA Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) and GSA IT. The IAE business structure provides a secure business environment that facilitates and supports acquisition of goods and services.

Through the work of acquisition professionals from across the federal enterprise, IAE is achieving its goal of streamlining the intricate system of processes needed to buy and track the purchase of goods and services, and issue federal assistance awards.

a. General Background:

IAE is currently merging the functionality of these systems for federal buyers and sellers, enabling shared award management services. There are currently 10 acquisition and federal assistance award-related systems operated by IAE on behalf of the federal government. This portfolio includes the systems where:

- an entity registers to do business with the federal government (System for Award Management at www.sam.gov)
- federal business opportunities are advertised publicly (Federal Business Opportunities at www.fbo.gov)
- federal procurement award information is publicly reported (Federal Procurement Data System at www.fpds.gov)
- federal awardee performance and integrity information is made available to federal decision-makers and the public (Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System at www.fapiis.gov)

IAE collaborates across the federal agencies by way of governance committees and persona focus groups. The focus groups are in place to have an active voice in crafting and designing the modernized platform. The governance committees are as follows:

- 1. Award Committee for E-Government (ACE)** – serves as the advisory and decision making body with responsibility for strategic planning and functional governance of the IAE portfolio of systems.
- 2. Financial Award Committee for E-Government (FACE)** – facilitates decision making regarding proposed requirements and initiative changes that affect the grant and loans and financial assistance communities.
- 3. Procurement Committee for E-Government (PCE)** – represents the functional needs of the procurement and broader acquisition community, and it serves as the community voice for data collection, reporting, and the analysis of the outcomes expected from the IAE portfolio of systems.
- 4. IAE Change Control Board (CCB)** – is the decision-making body for proposed change requests that affect IAE systems.

b. Issues:

With each software release, IAE works to improve the System for Award Management (SAM) user experience, improve the quality of information available from SAM, and reduce the burden for those who wish to do and have business with the U.S. government. In addition to minor enhancements and fixing known issues, recent key highlights include:

- Redesigned how users interact with existing entity registration records, streamlining the process and increasing usability.
 - Combined the three separate registration pages (Complete, Incomplete, and Inactive) into one page. From this Existing Entity Registrations page, user can search for a registration regardless of its status.
 - Improved the Entity List to sort alphabetically and included the unique identifier (DUNS Number or DoDAAC) next to the entity's Legal Business Name to quickly identify the correct entity from the list.
 - Provided more information in the initial Registration Details returned including Purpose of Registration, CAGE Code, and Activation/Expiration Date.
- Improved usability for administrators to manage role requests. Added additional fields on the Manage Role Requests page. Redesigned the page layout to provide enough information for the administrator charged with reviewing and approving role assignments for their entity to take appropriate action at a glance.
- Enhanced usability of key record date presentation. Reordered and renamed the key dates displayed within the Core Data module of entity registration.
- Improved both the security and look & feel of the API-driven SAM Status Tracker by bringing it into the application template. The SAM Status Tracker, still accessible from the SAM Homepage, is now visually consistent and provides more clear information about the registration process.
- Improved site-wide accessibility for blind and low-vision users. Completed a series of user-focused improvements in this area, presenting information to all users in a more predictable, logical sequence.
- Increasing data integrity about the determination of small business concerns in the Representations & Certifications section.

- Enabling SAM to collect the required information of any parent, subsidiary, or successor entities with regard to offerors that are responding to a solicitation for a federal contract.
- Increasing the relevance of search results in the Disaster Response Registry Search page.

IAE does quarterly enhancements, with the exception of the fourth quarter so there is no disruption to the end of the year acquisition and lifecycle process. In August 2016 IAE made an award to support further modernization of SAM.gov.

In April 2016, the IAE program hosted USDS for a discovery sprint. As a result of the discovery sprint and published report for IAE, the program re-baselined the schedule based on the current velocity of the onboarded development teams. After re-baselining the schedule, it was determined that the full integrated system into production will take place around April 2020, with releases of usable functionality throughout the development of the overall product in a SAFe Agile Framework.

The program has taken steps to address numerous recommendations from the USDS report, in addition to rebaselining the schedule. The program has addressed those recommendations as stated below:

- onboarding of several government personnel such as a Product Lead and Design Lead
- conducting a Communications Summit, which is currently scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2016 as the IAE Summit
- establishment of Integrated Product Teams
- clarified current product vision and differentiate from IAE organization vision
- improvements in branding and communications strategy are on-going and additional contractor support has been awarded to assist in these efforts.
- establishment of steering committees

2. SCOPE AND EFFECT:

a. Impact on GSA's Customers:

IAE services and systems support the entire federal procurement and financial assistance lifecycle facilitating millions of transactions resulting in trillions of dollars in federal spending every fiscal year. [IAE systems and services](#) enabled federal business covering over 5.2M records in Fiscal Year 2015 which amounted to over \$1 trillion in contracts, grants, and loan awards. While FY 2016 reporting is not complete it is anticipated results will exceed FY 2015 results. IAE is maintaining the current-state systems while building the modernized platform.

In addition, IAE manages the [Federal Service Desk](#) supporting SAM, CFDA, eSRS, FBO, FPDS-NG, FSRS, and WDOL. IAE also provides the Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) unique entity identification and monitoring services which enable federal award management and transparency of federal spending.

The (new) SAM.gov will serve as a 'one-stop shop' for all stakeholders participating in the federal awards process. A modern and leading-edge technology tool, the (new) SAM.gov will offer a comprehensive suite of capabilities enabling users to accomplish their required task when they need to, in the way they want to, and in collaboration with

the people they need to work with. It will be simple, straightforward, and easy to use and maintain. The new platform will eliminate task redundancy and reduce barriers to participating in federal awards processes. Constructed with users in mind, the (new) SAM.gov strives to model the TurboTax® experience, allowing users to be up and running quickly with minimal training or experience, while offering extensive user resources to help when needed.

b. Impact on the Private Sector and State & Local Governments:

The IAE supports all federal agencies that create contracts and financial assistance (ie grants) awards. Any entity wishing to do business with the Federal Government or participate in a Federal Grants program must register with SAM and use many of the other 10 IAE systems. Stakeholders include OMB (as the IAE eGov sponsor), regulatory organizations GAO, OIG, OMB, Congress and Regulatory Councils; Governance groups (Award Committee for e-Gov (ACE), Procurements Committee for e-Gov, Financial Assistance Committee for e-Gov, and the IAE Configuration Control Board (all of which are comprised of representatives of the 24 CFO-Act agencies except the seven-member ACE); and entities and users including the public and private businesses, federal users, state and local users, grantees, foreign organizations, universities, interested parties including industry council, media/press, watchdog groups and open government groups.

The ultimate goal is to transform IAE into a shared service that empowers its stakeholders to make strategic award and financial decisions. As a shared service, the goals are for IAE to greatly improve stakeholder experience through:

- integrating business processes
- enhancing data quality, data sharing and transparency
- providing secure technology platforms
- empowering efficient acquisition and awards
- working with governance to incorporate stakehold needs and collaboration

IAE is building the new SAM.gov in phases. Benefits include streamlined processes, elimination of data redundancies, improved capability, and reduced burden for users. The first phase of SAM.gov combined the functionality from the following systems:

- Central Contractor Registry (CCR)
- Federal Agency Registration (Fedreg)
- Online Representations and Certifications Application
- Excluded Parties List System (EPLS)

Entities must register in SAM.gov in order to do business with the federal government. This includes private sector companies (both small and large businesses), state governments, local governments, and tribal governments. Federal agencies use information from SAM.gov to make contract and federal assistance awards to these entities.

3. ACTION(S) PLANNED OR REQUIRED:

The IAE Program made a paradigm shift to embrace Agile development and continues to employ Agile methods in its transition to the future state. IAE uses Agile program management by adapting the Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe). The initial results of changing from a Waterfall development process to the SAFe Agile processes adopted by IAE have resulted in shorter development cycles allowing product owners, management and leadership to review the progress made at the Sprint Level and Release Level. The focus of the sprint level is to present to the Product owner for functionality and confirmation and acceptance of the Acceptance Criteria defined in the appropriate User Story and/or Feature and the Release Level should be able to demonstrate the functionalities set out in the vision statements presented at the Release Planning sessions. As it shifts the functionalities of the 10 federal acquisition and financial assistance systems into one environment, it has transitioned itself into fully embracing the advantages of Agile software development, including increasing our openness and transparency. IAE and the GSA IT have worked and continue to work extensively to define and refine business architecture and define the framework which guides how it captures both business concerns and technology implementations.

As part of the SAM refocus, IAE continues to work to improve SAM user experience, improve the quality of information available, and reduce the burden for those wishing to do business with the Federal government. Built on the Github platform, the openIAE site enables developers to build their own tools using application program interfaces (APIs) to retrieve publicly available SAM data about entities doing business with or seeking financial assistance from the government. Currently, developers are using the openIAE site for conducting lookups of documentation and code for their own applications, and has already received over two million hits.

Utilizing the Agile SAFe Framework, IAE will be working Release 9 Planning commencing January 2017. The primary goal of this Release is to make available to the public the search and view public data through the new SAM.gov common services user interface. The transition to Business Services Platform (BSP) is scheduled to take place at the end of March 2017. IAE will converge by March 2017. IAE plans to launch SAM.gov on BSP production by 4th quarter FY2017.

Other key activities in FY2017 are the development work for the core functionality, defining personas, and initiating a training program. IAE will continue its efforts with user analysis and design of the system/user experience to insure a comprehensive viewpoint is heard and has increased opportunities for feedback from the community prior to releases, during the build and prior to Go Live.

In preparation of the transition from the IAE Common Services Platform (CSP) to the BSP, IAE and GSA IT will take the necessary steps for success. Examples include: establish access and provisions to the BSP environment for the IAE team to install and set up the tools necessary to configure the components needed for IAE; install and configure IAE Container as a Service (CaaS), install and configure IAE IAM service, install and configure IAE API management; deploy and test candidate IAE Application to BSP; and obtain authority to operate (ATO) for IAE Components.

4. KEY STAKEHOLDER INTEREST:

As noted in Section 2b, the IAE program supports all federal agencies that create contracts and that provide financial assistance (i.e. grants, loans, and cooperative agreements). Any entity wishing to do business with the Federal Government or wishing to participate in a Federal grant program must first register in SAM and use many of the other 10 IAE systems. Stakeholders include Chief Acquisition Officers across the government, Chief Financial Officers across government, OMB (OFPP, OFFM, eGov), Congress, the Small Business Administration, industry, small businesses, industry associations, and the general public.

5. FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018 BUDGET IMPACT:

IAE is funded through the Acquisition Services Fund (ASF) to provide resources to the project through industrial funding fees (IFF) collections and through the corpus of the fund following the principles of the Cost and Capital Plan. These funding sources are available in addition to the traditional fee for service collections from the 24 CFO-Act agencies that occur each year to operate and maintain IAE. The agencies' funds are applied to the operations and maintenance and GSA's investment goes towards the platform modernization, build of the functionality of the ten legacy systems, independent verification and validation, overhead, FTE, etc. In FY2017, the 24 CFO Act agencies will contribute nearly \$64M. GSA will contribute \$68M. In FY2018, the 24 CFO Act agencies will contribute \$65M and GSA will apply \$44M.